

# The Latino vote: Can it make a difference?

**Omar Zapata**  
THE RIDER

With the Nov. 3 election less than six weeks away, UTRGV professors say Latinos could impact the results if they vote based on issues important to them.

Maritza De La Trinidad, an associate professor of Mexican American Studies, said the Latino vote is made up of many different groups of people whose families or heritage are from Latin American or Spanish-speaking countries. With many different groups in that umbrella term, every ethnicity has a different history of voting and this shows in how they currently vote.

She said immigration is an issue that most Latinos deal with or have been affected by, but that does not mean they all have the same viewpoint.

"We may all be Spanish speakers, immigration may affect us in one way or another, but we [Latinos] all have different views," Trinidad said.

The U.S. Hispanic population in 2019 was 60,572,237, up 20% or 10,093,626, since 2010, according to a news release on population estimates by the U.S. Census Bureau.

This presidential election, Latinos are projected, for the first time ever, to be the



THE RIDER FILE PHOTOS

Voters line up in the Student Union on the Edinburg campus to cast ballots in the November 2018 midterm election. A 2016 survey of 10,415 Latinos concluded that their three main concerns were immigration reform, health care and the creation/improvement of jobs.

largest racial or ethnic minority eligible to vote, according to the Pew Research Center. With 32 million projected to be able to vote, this accounts for 13.3% of all eligible voters. Texas Congressional District 34, which includes Cameron and Hidalgo counties, has an estimated 336,000

eligible Hispanic voters. In Texas Congressional District 15, which includes part of Hidalgo County, 73% of its total eligible voters are Hispanic.

The voting rate for Latinos in 2016 was 47.6%, down 2.3% from 2008, when it was 49.9%, according to a study by the U.S. Census Bureau. In 2000, 44.1% of eligible Latino voters cast ballots.

"So, in terms of historical patterns of voting, they're get-

ting better," De La Trinidad said. "Historically, they had been low, but a lot of that was due to political and legal barriers to voting."

She said the Latino vote has been a deciding factor in past elections.

"The Mexican American vote was extremely important and may have been the deciding factor in President [John F.] Kennedy's election in 1960,"

See **VOTE**, Page 8

## Student dating app stories Page 7

## M E E T THE RGV SERIAL TIPPER

**Fernanda Figueroa**  
THE RIDER

UTRGV alumna Clarissa Laura Ruiz, aka the RGV Serial Tipper, is helping community members by raising money to tip servers huge amounts of money across the Rio Grande Valley.



Clarissa Laura Ruiz

Having always been interested in philanthropy and community service, Ruiz began this movement in July after getting the idea from a TikTok video in the hope of spreading joy in the Valley.

"I would get onto social media and see a lot of division, sadness or despair," Ruiz said. "I grew tired of that and thought to myself how can we spread hope and joy here? So, when I came across this on TikTok, I thought, 'Hey, why not just start it here?'"

Ruiz collects donations from interested individuals every week through mobile payment apps from 5 p.m. Sunday through 3 p.m. Friday. Depending on the amount, collected tips are distributed

See **TIPPER**, Page 2

## HISPANIC DROPOUT RATE DECREASE, COLLEGE ENROLLMENT INCREASES

**13% decrease**

Between 2006 and 2018, the dropout rate declined for 16- to 24-year-olds who were Hispanic.

Between 1976 and 2017, the percentage of Hispanic enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions rose.

**15% Increase**



Source: National Center for Education Statistics

JACQUELINE WALLACE/THE RIDER GRAPHIC

## HISPANIC EDUCATION ON THE RISE

**Jacqueline Peraza**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Natali Hernandez, a mass communication senior, said she views her parents' encouragement and their college degrees displayed at her home as a motivating factor for continuing her education.

Asked why she decided to continue her education, Hernandez replied, "My parents both have a college degree so it was, kind of, an unsung rule that I go to college, but it was something that I looked forward to as well. I didn't want to go into the field and start working at

the age of 18. ... I knew if I wanted to live comfortably and have a nice job with a nice house at a young age, at 22, hopefully, college was going to be the route for me."

The National Center for Education Statistics reported the dropout rate declined for Hispanic 16- to 24-year-olds from 21% in 2006 to 8% in 2018.

Ana Peña-Oliva, a lecturer of Hispanic linguistics and undergraduate Spanish program degree specialist, said one of the reasons why the dropout rate is decreasing could be because of the shift in the type of immigrants coming to the

United States.

"Before, a lot of the immigrants that came to the United States were a lot of farmworkers or old-skilled workers," Peña-Oliva said. "Now, the immigration has changed. A lot of the immigrants that come to the United States are professionals that have [received] a college education in their country."

She said the people immigrating to the United States understand and believe in the importance of education, so they pass on that knowledge to their children.

"They support the children by providing financial help and they support them because they have gone to college, so they are able to assist their children while they are doing homework," Peña-Oliva said. "In other words, they help them remove the obstacles that they will have if they don't understand how to do an assignment. That makes a big difference. Then again, because they are professionals with a college education they want to make sure that the children do it, too. That is why they support them and they make sure that

they not only don't drop out from high school but continue their studies in college."

According to the NCES, "from fall 1976 to fall 2017, the percentage of Hispanic students rose from 4% to 19% of all U.S. residents enrolled in degree-granting postsecondary institutions."

Asked why she believes more Hispanics are enrolling in universities, Peña-Oliva replied, receiving a college education is the key to success and parents know that.

"They push the children to further their education by acquiring a college degree," she said.

Hernandez said she believes the reason for the decrease in the dropout rate and increase in enrollment can be tied to the rise of resources high schools offer students and easier access to technology.

"When I was in high school, they had this place called the GO Center and they hired somebody from a university and they would come and help us with our college applications, and they would enroll us in Dual Enrollment

**"I knew if I wanted to live comfortably and have a nice job with a nice house ... college was going to be the route for me. -Natali Hernandez Mass communication senior"**

See **EDUCATION**, Page 7



# THE RIDER

The Rider is the official, award-winning student newspaper of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. A PDF copy of the newspaper can be accessed online at [utrgvrider.com](http://utrgvrider.com). Views presented are those of the writers and do not reflect those of the newspaper or university.

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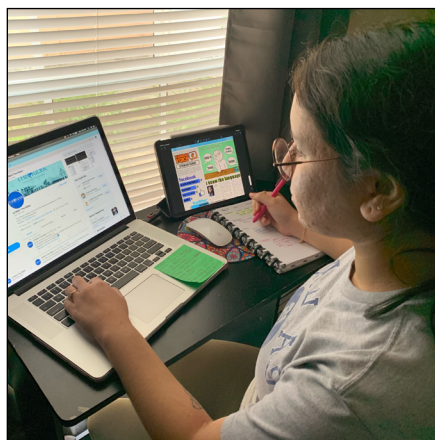
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## MORE THAN A NEWSPAPER

Delivering news to UTRGV no matter the circumstances.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS



**Today**  
**Vaqueros on the Mic**  
The **Campus Activities Board** will host a **Vaqueros on the Mic Hispanic Heritage Month Edition** for students to show off their talent at 3:30 p.m. via Zoom. RSVP is available through VLink.

**Tuesday**  
**Union Talent Show**  
Students can submit a **video showing off their talent** via social media or at [studentunion@utrgv.edu](mailto:studentunion@utrgv.edu) before 3 p.m. Winners will be announced at 5 p.m. on the **Student Union's** social media platforms and will be given **UTRGV Swag**.

**Wednesday**  
**Virtual Involvement Fair**  
The **Leadership and Mentoring** office will host a **virtual involvement fair** for UTRGV students from 5 to 7 p.m.

Fairs are designed to help both current and incoming students **connect with organizations** registered at UTRGV. RSVP is available through VLink.

**Graphic Thoughts- What are you reading?**  
**The Research and Instructional Services** department of the **University Library** will host discussions on graphic novels, cartoons, and other **pop culture issues** from 5 to 6 p.m. via Zoom. RSVP is available through VLink.

**Friday**  
**Netflix Watch Party: Street Food-Latin America**

In celebration of **Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month** the **Leadership and Mentoring** office will host a **Netflix pre-watch and after party** via Zoom. RSVP is available through VLink.

**National Comic Book Day**  
The **Student Union** invites students

to dress up, share their favorite comics and learn how to draw themselves as superheroes in observance of **National Comic Book Day**, starting at 1 p.m. via Zoom. RSVP is available through VLink.

**Spooky Movie Marathon**  
Students can watch **"The Haunted Mansion"** and **"The Nightmare Before Christmas"** via a Disney+ watch party at 5 p.m. To be considered for a raffle, students must RSVP through VLink by 5 p.m. on Thursday. The **Campus Activities Board** will host the event and send out a link at 1 p.m.

**Saturday**  
**"Mean Girls" Trivia**

Students can test their **"Mean Girls"** knowledge and enter for a chance to win prizes. The event, sponsored by **Campus Activities Board**, will take place from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. RSVP is available through VLink.

--Compiled by *Brigitte Ortiz*

## POLICE REPORTS



The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between Sept. 15 and 22.

### Sept. 15

**10:28 a.m.:** A female staff member reported losing her university-issued key at her off-campus residence.

**10:48 a.m.:** An

officer responded to Heritage Hall on the Edinburg campus in reference to a male subject bothering female students. The male was subsequently located by the Edinburg Liberal Arts Building South. Investigation revealed the non-affiliated male had an active criminal trespass warning on file that had been issued Oct. 14, 2019. The male was arrested on a criminal trespass charge and transported to the Edinburg jail.

**2:43 p.m.:** A male staff member reported losing a university-issued mechanical tool somewhere while working at different areas around the Edinburg campus. A report was generated for documentation purposes.

**3:55 p.m.:** A female staff member reported her vehicle's window was shattered while parked unattended in Lot E-5 on the Edinburg campus. The officer inspected the area, observing the grass had been recently trimmed by Facilities. The female staff member was referred to Facilities.

**5:48 p.m.:** A female staff member reported her vehicle's window was shattered while parked unattended in Lot E-3 on the Edinburg campus. The officer inspected the area, observing the grass had been recently trimmed

by Facilities. The female staff member was referred to Facilities.

**8:57 p.m.:** An officer responded to Lot B-7 in reference to a vehicle collision involving two university owned vehicles. The staff member, while backing up, struck an unattended parked vehicle causing minor damage. No injuries were reported.

### Sept. 16

**10:36 a.m.:** UTRGV PD responded to an active fire alarm at the UT Health RGV Rheumatology Clinic in Edinburg. It was determined that the alarm was triggered by construction workers using a grinder tool causing the dust to trigger a smoke detector. The Edinburg Fire Department responded, and the fire panel was reset. The building is currently undergoing renovations.

### Sept. 17

**8:51 a.m.:** Officers responded to Lot E-7 on the Edinburg campus in reference to a report of a reckless driver. An officer made contact with the parties involved and determined that the elements for reckless driving were not met. The officers' investigation concluded that both parties involved were confused and believed the other party was giving them the right of way.

**12:51 p.m.:** An officer was dispatched to 600 N. Sugar Road in reference to a traffic accident involving two students. The vehicles sustained minor damage. No injuries were reported.

### Sept. 20

**11:11 a.m.:** Officers were dispatched to

the University Center on the Edinburg campus in regard to a burnt odor in the building. The Edinburg Fire Department responded to check the building. At this time, it is unknown what caused the burnt odor. The fire panel was checked but showed no issues. The Edinburg Fire Department later cleared the building for re-entry.

### Sept. 21

**7:47 a.m.:** A female student reported she was involved in a verbal argument in Lot E-16 on the Edinburg campus with her boyfriend, a male student. During the course of the argument, the male punched the passenger side window of her vehicle, shattering it. Investigation confirmed that no assault occurred. The female student chose not to file criminal charges in regards to the damaged window. This incident will be referred to Student Rights and Responsibilities for further review.

**9:17 a.m.:** A male staff member reported losing four university keys. The keys were lost sometime in March.

### Sept. 22

**4:24 a.m.:** A female student requested an escort to her dorm room at Heritage Hall on the Edinburg campus. She reported having been involved in a verbal dispute with her non-affiliated boyfriend off campus. The student was concerned that her boyfriend might come by campus to look for her. She also mentioned she had documented a similar incident with the Edinburg Police. She only wanted to document the incident.

## TIPPER

*Continued from Page 1*

between one or three individuals across the Valley, rotating among counties every week.

"The selection of choosing recipients is truly divine intervention," Ruiz said. "It's basically recommendations and [letting] God lead us."

It truly was divine intervention for Gavin Flores, a server at Classic's Bar & Grill in Harlingen and recent recipient of a tip from Ruiz. Flores originally did not plan to attend work, having just come from a football game, but, luckily, his mom convinced him otherwise.

"I thought it was going to be a normal day," Flores said. "[Ruiz] started telling me about the tip and I was in shock because it's not something that happens every day to somebody. I was just in

shock and I felt blessed because it was happening to me."

Amid the coronavirus pandemic, the work that Ruiz is doing is a blessing to the RGV community.

"It's great because you don't know what kind of situation somebody is in," said Victoria Garcia, Flores' mother. "People that are at work, working hard, deserve something like that."

Ruiz said she feels extremely blessed that she is able to bring a smile to people's faces and hopes that this movement can show how people from different backgrounds, even if they just have a little bit to give, can come together and help others.

"I am literally just the vessel," she said. "It shows how many people can come together regardless of race, religion, identity or political affiliation. It

talks a lot about how somebody is willing to give whatever they have not knowing what is about to come next for their own personal future."

Ruiz does not know how long she will continue being the RGV Serial Tipper, but with the support of the RGV community she will continue to do so.

"I would love for this to continue for a while, but it's all in the hands of the ones who are supporting the movement," she said.

Donations can be made through: Venmo at: Clarissa-Ruiz-1995 and CashApp at: \$rruiz0414.

You can also follow Ruiz on Facebook @RGVSerialTipper and TikTok @clarissaruiz30.

For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/RGVSERIALTIPPER/>.

Visit us online at [utrgvrider.com](http://utrgvrider.com)



# Graduate College extends GRE, GMAT waiver for students

**Alejandra Yañez**  
THE RIDER

The UTRGV Graduate College has extended its waiver for the GRE and GMAT test requirements to all applicants until Summer 2021, in response to the closing of test centers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Students have taken advantage because, as you know, one of the major issues for many students is finding the time to study for the test,” said Parwinder Grewal, executive vice president of research in graduate studies and new programs and dean of the Graduate College. “People are also worried about getting exposed to the virus, so we thought it would be fair for all students if we do not require the GRE and GMAT for this year.”

The waiver of the Graduate Record Exam and the Graduate Management Admission Test may be extended into Fall 2021, according to Grewal.

“This initiative began because of COVID-19,” he said. “In many places the test centers were closed, so the students could not take their tests. That is the main reason we waived the tests for our students at least for one year.”

Application fees to most graduate programs have been voided since 2018 and the Graduate College plans to continue to make this incentive available for students.

However, there are some ex-



**Roxanna Miranda**/THE RIDER

The UTRGV Graduate College has extended the waiver for the GRE and GMAT exams until Summer 2021. The university is working to extend this incentive to the Fall 2021 semester, according to Parwinder Grewal, executive vice president for Research, Graduate Studies and New Program Development and dean of the Graduate College.

ceptions, such as professional programs for a physician assistant, which have limited seating and, therefore, require an application fee.

“Nationally, the accreditation bodies only allot us so many spots, so in those programs we will continue to have the application fee, but for all other programs ... we will continue to waive the application fee,” Grewal said.

The college continues to provide rolling admission, which allows students to apply at any time throughout the year and be admitted to the nearest semester.

Asked what scholarships are available to incoming graduates, Grewal replied, “Right now we still continue to have the Presidential Graduate Research Assistantship, the PGRA. We also have some for the new programs. Once we start a new program, we gener-

ally have new scholarships for students who are the first to enter that program.”

Accelerated programs have become popular with students who are working or cannot come to campus, Grewal said.

These programs are offered fully online in an accelerated format and are broken down into seven-week modules.

“In each seven-week module, students can complete two courses,” Grewal said. “So, in a semester’s time, students can complete four courses instead of normally completing three.”

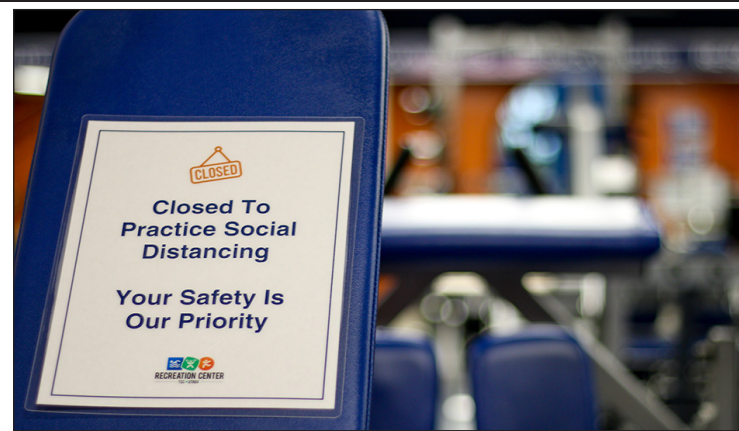
Since 2015, enrollment for Accelerated Online Programs has increased by 250%, according to Grewal.

Accelerated Online Programs offered:

--Master of Science in Kinesiology

--Master of Business Administration with a Specialization

See **GRADUATE**, Page 8



**Robert Benavidez**/THE RIDER

Select equipment at the Texas Southmost College Recreation Center has been marked “closed to practice social distancing.” The equipment on both floors are open for use.

## TSC Rec Center reopens

**Brigitte Ortiz**

THE RIDER

The Recreation Center in Brownville opened its doors to Texas Southmost College and UTRGV students today.

The Recreation Center is open by appointment only. Students can create an IM-League account with their UTRGV email, click on “weight room, 2nd floor cardio/track, tennis and racquetball courts” and register for their workout in certain areas within the facility. Videos on step-by-step instruction are available on the Recreation Center Facebook page.

Armando Ponce, executive director for Student Life and Civility at TSC, said they have 45-minute appointments and close after to clean and disinfect the building. The capacity is 50 people per session.

“We do deep cleaning, you know, we have all the necessary cleaning supplies that’ve been recommended,” Ponce said. “Our staff all received COVID training through a continuity education program that TSC offers.”

He said the Recreation Center created a safety plan following the recommended Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines.

“What we’ve done is [take] the best practices from other institutions across the state,” Ponce said. “We, just like

UTRGV, belong to NIRSA, the National Intramural Recreational Sports Association. [We had] several meetings over the summer, on some of the best practices on reopening rec centers, throughout the state with the safety of our faculty, staff and students in mind.”

Jaime Salazar, executive director of Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management at TSC, said all the protocols and procedures the Recreation Center has implemented are in accordance with state, federal and local guidance, or ordinance.

“We’ve taken every step to not only get our health protocol requirements in place, but we’ve gone above and beyond that, including minimizing the total amount of people that can be in the building,” Salazar said. “Ensuring that they’re social distancing, ensuring that they’re self-monitoring and, of course, all of our employees have been trained and will be monitoring the movement, entry and departure of all the students.”

Ponce said when a student walks in, they must have a facial covering, full-finger gloves and bring their own water or towel. An employee will check their temperature after they verify they’ve made an appointment.

See **REC**, Page 5

# Going out during the pandemic



**Roxanna Miranda**/THE RIDER PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

According to Jose Campo Maldonado, an assistant professor and director of infectious surveillance for the UTRGV School of Medicine, wearing a cloth facial covering that covers both your nose and mouth decreases the risk of getting infected with COVID-19.

**Sol Garcia**  
THE RIDER

If students follow proper health protocol, going out could be healthy for their mental well-being, said Joseph Hovey, a professor in the Department of Psychological Science.

“Leaving the house, even if it’s for non-essential reasons, ... could be healthy, but it depends on whether you’re following proper public health protocol,” he said.

Hovey and his colleagues had con-

ducted research data on mental health in March and April. He said many people had concerns that included isolation, income loss and stress over catching COVID-19.

“All this leads to pretty elevated rates of things like anxiety, depression, alcohol, opiate use, suicidal thoughts,” said Hovey, who specializes in anxiety, depression and Latino mental health.

If students leave home to destress or cope, going out can be positive, he said.

“Going out and leaving the home is

actually a positive thing, if what you’re trying to do is destress, if it’s used as a way of coping, for example, by connecting to other people, friends and family,” Hovey said.

If students choose to go out, he recommends they wear facial coverings and avoid large groups or hanging out indoors for extended periods.

“It is a good thing to go out,” Hovey said. “There’s smart ways of doing this, and there’s ways that would really put you at risk.”

Raul Reyes, a rehabilitation and addiction studies junior, said his mental health has gotten better since he started going out compared to the first three or four months when he would stay home.

“I was just feeling a lot of isolation and loneliness, even though I would try to make plans with my friends, like as in ... Zoom or [a] call,” he said. “Now it’s so much better and I can actually see them. It just feels better to go out of the house.”

Reyes will go out about twice a week with a friend or two to the mall or restaurants. He calls popular restaurants ahead of time to know if they have social-distanced tables and keeps hand sanitizer and a facial covering with him.

“Even before the pandemic, I always had a Germ-X with me so I could always clean my hands, and I wear a mask everywhere if I’m in public,” he said.

Jose Campo Maldonado, assistant professor and director of infection surveillance for the UTRGV School of Medicine, believes not going out at all if it can be avoided is the best way to avoid the transmission of COVID-19, but there are some precautions students and others can take if they choose to go out, which include:

- avoiding crowded areas,
- hanging out outside,
- keeping your distance from others at least 6 feet,
- wearing nose and mouth cloth facial coverings, and
- using soap and water or hand sanitizers.

“All those things together can help to significantly decrease the risk of transmission in those who end up going out,” Campo Maldonado said.

Students who hang out in groups should try to minimize the groups size, while following the other precautions, he said.

“Try to minimize the size of the group,” he said. “Try to keep your distance from others.”

If a student is going to another person’s house, they should be aware of their surroundings, Campo Maldonado said.

“If you’re going to someone else’s house and the ventilation is not very

See **PRECAUTION**, Page 5





**SPANISH DISH**

On Sept. 21, The Rider conducted a poll on social media asking students, "Which of the following famous Spanish dishes would you consider to be your favorite?" The results are shown below.

**facebook**

**TAMALES** 27

**TACOS** 24

**ENCHILADAS** 9

**MOLE** 7



**twitter**

**20 TAMALES**

**9 ENCHILADAS**

**5 MOLE**

**5 RICE AND BEANS**



**Instagram**

**TACOS** 22

**MOLE** 17

**RICE AND BEANS** 16

**TAMALES** 11



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**Rest in Peace**



**I have never been more tired**



**Sol Garcia**  
THE RIDER

When I was young, I used to hold my mother's hand tightly, so the wind wouldn't blow me away. Now, it's not normal winds. It's tropical storms and hurricanes.

It could be worse. It could be fires that scream brighter than the sun. The ones that paint the sky orange and red but don't affect the farm workers. Those farm workers continue to work. They're immune to the dangerous air quality and the harsh comments like, "Stop stealing our jobs, even though we would rather be dead than actually pick food!"

I'm tired of hearing about these fires and storms. I'll just skip the weather section for now.

"Police officer shoots unarmed Black man in Everywhere, U.S."

Another fatality. The cops say he threatened them. They acted in self-defense, they say. It was necessary, they say. The man's mother is shown on the screen, tears flowing from her eyes, just like mine. He suffered from extreme mental health issues, she says. Her cracking voice is tuned out by a system that doesn't care. It's later revealed the officers had previous offenses. Only one has been fired since then, while the rest continue to patrol our dangerous streets. Our heroes.

I'm tired of hearing about these deaths. I'll just skip to politics.

"Ruth Bader Ginsburg dies at 87."

I can't grieve over her properly. I need to make an appointment at Planned Parenthood before November, like most of my female friends are doing. We know what dangers may soon be upon us.

"You're just mad because you can't kill babies anymore," they yell at us in Tweets and other posts.

They tune us out when we explain Planned Parenthood provides more resources than just terminating a pregnancy. They don't listen when we say those who do use that specific resource should be allowed to do so without being shamed for it, for it is their bodies. They don't listen when we say we have no other option, for we were not born with pockets full of cash and luxury.

I'm tired of hearing about politics. I'll just skip to sports.

"Department of Education tells states to ban transgender athletes."

Another discrimination on people who have it hard enough. It doesn't matter that they have known a pandemic before COVID-19. One stirred by hate from their blood relatives and their closest friends. Every day, they are shamed for being their true selves. They are beaten while waiting for a taxi. Bystanders don't care. They record and laugh. They are murdered at bars, and their protections are robbed from them on the same day, just a few years apart and under a different presidency. Now, even sports are not allowed for them.

I'm tired of hearing about

sports. I'll just hear state news.

"In recent years, more Fort Hood soldiers have died in homicides than in battle."

She was only one year older than me, another Hispanic like me. It had been her dream to serve since she was a child. She was supposed to fight for democracy and freedom, just like he was. Instead of remembering his smile as he says, "I do," his family members will remember the bruises and scratches on his body. He will never get the chance to say those two words.

I'm tired of hearing about all these issues that should never have happened. They say this year is cursed, as if racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, classism and discrimination did not exist before 2020.

I'm so tired of reposting one tragedy after another in the hope of bringing awareness. I'm tired of signing a petition every two hours in the hope that my signature will make a difference. I'm tired of praying every night to God or the Goddess or anyone who will listen to help us all.

My depression and my anxiety worsen as I hear about the latest tragedy. They never, ever stop.

Yet, I continue to fight. I repost and bring awareness to my closest friends. I sign petition after petition. When possible, I donate. As tired as I am, I will help make the world better in any way I can. We cannot rest until we are all free. We do not have the privilege of holding our mothers' hands anymore.

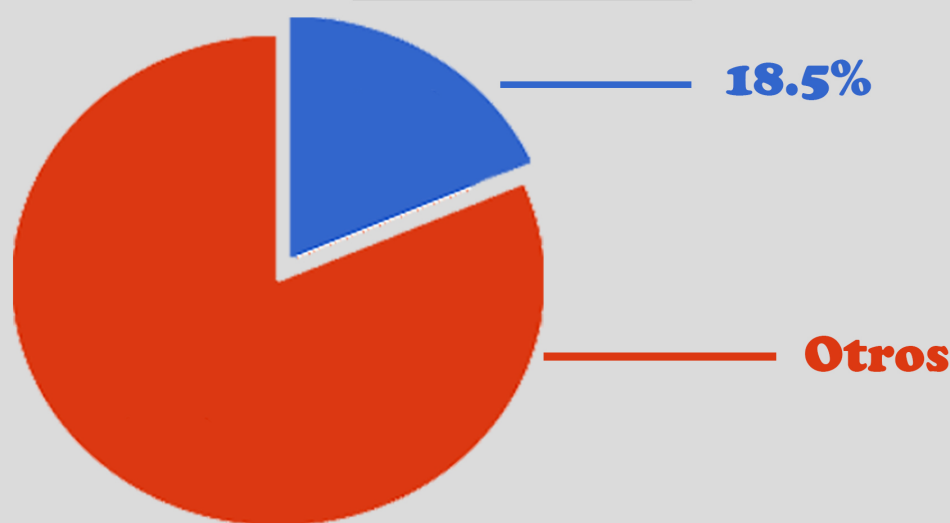
**Have a story idea?**

Let us know at

**882-5143 or 665-5085**



**POBLACIÓN HISPANA O LATINA EN LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS**



Fuente: La Oficina del Censo de los EE.UU

Robert Benavidez/GRÁFICA DE THE RIDER

# La comunidad de UTRGV comparte sus ideas sobre identidad racial

**Paulina Longoria**

THE RIDER

“Yo no soy marinero. Yo no soy marinero. Soy chicano, soy chicano, soy chicano”, es parte de la letra de la canción “La Bamba Rebelde” de la banda chicana Las Cafeteras, a la cual los presentes en la reunión por Zoom de la “Serie de la Gente” (The People Series) escucharon al principio.

El pasado martes por la noche, el Centro de Diversidad e Inclusión de UTRGV llevó a cabo su primer “Serie de la Gente” en colaboración con el Centro para Estudios Mexicoamericanos por Zoom.

El Centro de Diversidad e Inclusión (CDI, por sus siglas en inglés) tiene como propósito “apoyar a los grupos de afinidad basados en cultura, mejorar la programación que construye la competencia cultural y el discurso civil, y proveer apoyo directo a los estudiantes”, según su sitio web.

Para sus estudiantes, el Centro de Estudios Mexicoamericanos (CMAS, pos sus siglas en inglés) “provee programación, oportunidades de investigación y cooperación en la comunidad en el campo de estudios mexicoamericanos”, afirma su sitio web.

Aaron Hinojosa, el coordinador del CDI, dijo que la meta de la “Serie de la Gente” es aprender juntos sobre personas.

“Yo pienso que uniendo a las personas en un grupo [de Zoom] y creando un espacio seguro para las personas para que puedan, ya sea, compartir conocimiento, compartir

recursos, o hablar de sus experiencias, y en realidad solo aprender entre ellos ... esa es la idea fundamental de esto”, Hinojosa dijo.

El tema de conversación de la serie fue “¿Se dice hispano? Latino? Latina? Latinx? Latin@?”

Después de que los asistentes se registraron para el evento por VLink, recibieron el enlace de Zoom junto con un correo con recursos, como artículos, videos y cómics para

**“ Hay esta tendencia ... específicamente en los Estados Unidos ... que querer identificar la raza de alguien y la inhabilidad al hacerlo. ”**

**-Stephanie Álvarez Directora de CMAS**

estar preparados para la conversación y compartir sus opiniones.

Stephanie Álvarez, la directora del CMAS y una profesora de la Facultad de Estudios Interdisciplinarios y la Colaboración en la Comunidad, dijo que el término preferido para identificar la raza en el Valle del Río Grande es hispano.

“Mi percepción en estos 15 años que he estado aquí es que el primer término que se les viene a la mente a las personas es hispano”, Álvarez dijo.

Ella también dijo que la cosa más importante acerca de la identidad es empoderarse en una forma en que te sientas cómodo sin apropiarse de la cultura de otras personas.

“Yo sólo creo que en realidad es sobre empoderarse a uno mismo, que tu tomes poder y no dejes que otras personas determinen cómo te representas”.

Hinojosa alentó a los más de 20 participantes en la reunión a presentarse entre ellos y contestar las preguntas que él proporcionó:

--¿Con qué términos estabas familiarizado antes de la sesión y cómo es que aprendiste sobre ellos?

--¿Qué aprendiste de alguno de los recursos?

--¿Cómo eliges identificarte considerando lo que has aprendido?

--¿Cómo es que este aprendizaje aplica a otras identidades étnicas o raciales?

--¿Qué opinas acerca de la historia de los términos?

--¿Tuviste aprendizajes?

Álvarez dijo que la pregunta No. 1 que le preguntaron al crecer, y aún siendo adulta, es “¿Qué eres?”

“Esa pregunta es muy deshumanizante”, ella dijo. “Hay esta tendencia ... específicamente en los Estados Unidos ... de querer identificar la raza de alguien y la inhabilidad al hacerlo. Eso causa mucha ansiedad en las personas al querer saber qué eres”.

Luis Torres-Hostos, decano de la Facultad de Labor Social, dijo que la identidad por definición significa elección.

Vea **PERSONA**, Page 7

# Más hispanos continúan su educación

LA TASA DE ABANDONO ESCOLAR DE HISPANOS DISMINUYÓ, LAS INSCRIPCIONES A LA UNIVERSIDAD INCREMENTAN



Fuente: Centro Nacional para las Estadísticas de Educación (NCES)

Jacqueline Wallace/GRÁFICA DE THE RIDER

**Jacqueline Peraza**

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Natali Hernández, una estudiante de último año de comunicación en masas, dijo que ella ve el apoyo de sus padres y sus títulos universitarios desplegados en su casa como un factor de motivación para continuar con su educación.

Se le preguntó a Hernandez por qué decidió continuar con su educación.

“Mis dos padres tienen un título universitario entonces era algo como, una regla no escrita de que debo ir a la universidad, pero era algo a lo que también anhelaba”, ella respondió. “No quería ir al campo de trabajo y empezar a trabajar a la edad de 18. ... Yo sé que si quería vivir una vida estable y tener un buen trabajo con una buena casa a una edad joven, a los 22, con suerte, la universidad iba a ser el trayecto para mí”.

El Centro Nacional para las Estadísticas Educativas (NCES, por sus siglas en inglés) reportó que la condición de la tasa de abandono escolar disminuyó para los hispanos de 16 a 24 años de edad desde un 21% en el 2006 hasta un 8% en el 2018.

Ana Peña-Oliva, una profesora de lingüística hispánica y especialista del programa de la licenciatura pregrado de español, dijo que una de las razones por las que la tasa de abandono escolar está disminuyendo es por el cambio del tipo de inmigrantes que están llegando a los Estados Unidos.

“Antes, muchos inmigrantes que venían a los Estados Unidos eran muchos trabajadores agrícolas o trabajadores viejos cualificados”, Peña-Oliva dijo. “Ahora, la inmigración ha cambiado. Muchos de los inmigrantes que vienen a los Estados Unidos son profesionales que han [recibido] una educación universitaria en sus

países”.

Ella dijo que las personas inmigrando a los Estados Unidos entienden y creen en la importancia de la educación, así que ellos le pasan ese conocimiento a sus hijos.

“Ellos apoyan a sus hijos al proporcionarles ayuda financiera y los apoyan porque han ido a la universidad, así que son capaces de ayudar a sus hijos cuando están haciendo tarea”, Peña-Oliva dijo. “En otras palabras, los ayudan a remover obstáculos en caso de que no entiendan cómo hacer una tarea. Eso hace una gran diferencia. Y otra vez, porque son profesionales con una educación universitaria, quieren asegurarse de que sus hijos los tengan también. Esa es la razón por la que los apoyan y se aseguran de que no solo abandonen la preparatoria pero también continúen sus estudios en la universidad”.

Según la NCES, “desde del otoño de 1976 al otoño de 2017, el porcentaje de los estudiantes hispanos incrementó del 4% al 19% de todos los residentes de EE.UU inscritos en instituciones postsecundarias que otorgan títulos”.

Se le preguntó por qué cree que más hispanos se están inscribiendo a la universidad. Peña-Oliva contestó, recibir una educación universitaria es la clave para el éxito y los padres saben eso.

“Ellos alientan a sus hijos para continuar su educación al adquirir un título universitario”, ella dijo.

Hernández dijo que ella cree que la razón de la disminución de la tasa de abandono escolar y el incremento en las inscripciones pueden conectarse al incremento de recursos que las preparatorias le ofrecen a sus estudiantes y al fácil acceso a la tecnología.

“Cuando estaba en la preparatoria, ellos tenían este lugar

Vea **EDUCACIÓN**, Page 8

**REC**  
Continued from Page 3

Asked if there will be intramural sports this semester, Ponce replied, “The intramural

sports, right now, we’re still uncertain. We’re doing esports for intramurals. We’re working on possibly doing some individual-type things, as well, but it has not been decided if we’re

going to move forward with intramurals, you know, with safety being a priority at this point.”

**PRECAUTION**  
Continued from Page 3

good, you may be at higher risk of getting the infection, even if you try to keep your distance or wear a mask,” he said.

Students should wear a facial covering when visiting someone else’s home, and if there is an older person there, that older person should also wear a

facial covering, Campo Maldonado said.

“Maybe those older individuals, who have heightened risk factors, should be wearing not just a cloth mask, but maybe even a surgical mask to help protect a little better and minimize contact with visitors,” he said.

Students should avoid hanging out in crowds and indoors

because of ventilation and a lack of space to distance, Campo Maldonado said.

“It’s problematic if you don’t have good ventilation and cannot keep your distance,” he said. “Those are two places that [have] a higher risk of transmission.”

Some good, low-risk places to hang out at are neighborhoods, parks or recreational

areas if there are not many people around others, Campo Maldonado said.

“Those are places which ... there is a lot of ventilation or just outdoors,” he said. “If you are going to be close to people who don’t live with you, you probably still need to follow the precautions, keeping your distance and wearing your face coverings for sure.”

Campo Maldonado said he believes it will be likely that people will go out and get exposed as Halloween and other holidays approach.

“Be aware of these activities,” he said. “Some of these activities, especially if you don’t follow these precautions, can increase the rates of transmission.”

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# NCAA sets D1 basketball start date

## Regular season to begin Nov. 25

**Ivan Palacios**  
THE RIDER

The NCAA Division I Council met Sept. 16 and released the biggest news in the future of fall sports--basketball is set to begin play Nov. 25.

The season is now set to begin 15 days after its original start date of Nov. 10. The main factor in choosing to move the season back a couple of weeks was the NCAA's intention to start the season after most Division I schools had either completed their fall term or moved the remainder of the semester online.

Delaying the season allowed schools to create a less populated environment for student athletes and coaches, reducing the risk of a COVID-19 outbreak to happen throughout campuses.

"Some of the rationale behind it has a lot to do with the college campuses, just the way that institutions are built," said Chasse Conque, vice president and director of Athletics at UTRGV. "Students on campus, that's right there at the Thanksgiving break. So that's Thanksgiving week with games starting on the 25th. So you'll see, I think, a lot of campuses get a little bit quieter.

"As we talk about creating, which we already have in place, a soft bubble for our student athletes, it's just helpful in the mitigation process. Obviously, we're excited and support it. You hate seeing any season get cut short. But it's really a minimal impact and I think it's a really good time for us."

Along with the start date, changes were made to the number of games allowed, reducing the total number of games played by four in both



Senior guard Chris Freeman (left) defends against redshirt sophomore guard Quinton Johnson II during practice last Thursday at the UTRGV Fieldhouse.

men's and women's basketball. The NCAA offered a template on how to schedule games for the upcoming season and recommended that teams schedule a minimum of four non-conference games.

With the WAC being a diverse conference with teams all over the country, the Vaqueros intend to play a nonconference schedule primarily against teams in the Texas region.

"We really want to stay close in the nonconference," UTRGV Men's Basketball Head Coach Lew Hill said. "We wanna stay around in the Texas area so we could just be more on the bus. And then once we get into conference, we'll be flying all over the place. So we want to stay as close as possible around here to just go to the game and get back home and try to stay as safe as possible. But we're excited."

The changes to the scheduling is good news for the inaugural South Padre Island Tournament, which was to be hosted by the UTRGV Women's

**"But now knowing, we can smile a little bit and figure the rest of this schedule out."**

**-Lew Hill**

**UTRGV Men's Basketball Head Coach**

en's Basketball team later this year. Scheduled originally to be a four-team tournament, UTRGV is looking at possibly expanding the competition to help accommodate other teams' scheduling issues.

"The original four teams that we had, Weber State, North

Texas, Prairie View A&M and ourselves, are all in. But with all this shuffling of the schedules, there may be an opportunity for us to add a couple of teams," said Lane Lord, UTRGV Women's Basketball head coach. "We may extend the tournament to another day, but we'll see how that all unfolds in the next week."

With a start date now on the table, teams have been allowed to begin practices as of Sept. 21. These practices are limited by the NCAA, allowing teams to participate in strength and conditioning activities, sport-related meetings and skill instruction for up to 12 hours a week, with an eight-hour limit on skill instruction. Players must also be allowed two days off per week during this period.

Practice conditions are temporary and are a part of the

transition period the NCAA implemented to allow players and coaches to prepare, both mentally and physically, for the upcoming season. The transition period is set to end Oct. 13.

After the transition period, teams will be allowed to begin full practices Oct. 14 as they prepare for the start of the season. During this time frame, teams will be allowed to practice a maximum of 30 times, at a maximum of 20 hours per week, four hours per day. Teams must also allow players to have one day off a week.

These conditions are similar to those of a normal offseason. For many, this will be the first time since their season was cut short in March that they will be able to step onto a court.

"Six months ago today, we're flying back from Vegas," Lord said. "The men's team didn't even get to play their tournament. We left early. The rest is history. It's been a tough time, it really has. Today's announcement is just awesome. We're so ecstatic."

With a date for the start of the season, UTRGV Athletics is excited to finally be able to get the ball rolling with their athletes.

"I'm very excited," Hill said. "We've been waiting for this day for quite some time. It's just exciting to know what you're going to do. When you're living in the unknown and not knowing, and not knowing when the season is going to start or how we're going to play this season, it's disheartening. But now knowing, we can smile a little bit and figure the rest of this schedule out. Let's see if we can put some people in the stands and play some basketball."

# Athlete of the Week: Connor Raines



COURTESY PHOTO  
UTRGV forward Connor Raines

Sophomore Connor Raines is a forward on the UTRGV Men's Basketball Team. He began his collegiate athletic career during the 2019-2020 season. In his first season, Raines played in 28 games and scored his career-high 15 points in the UTRGV vs. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi game.

**Q:** What is your favorite aspect of your sport?

**A:** "I would say the atmosphere. I also just have a huge love for the game."

**Q:** What made you first start

playing basketball?

**A:** "Well, originally, I wanted to play football, but I wasn't big enough. So, basketball kind of came into play, and I was pretty good at it. So, I just stuck with it."

**Q:** Who is your sports role model?

**A:** "It'll be Devin Booker. He is just different. He scores very well, you know. He's done a lot of good things."

**Q:** What do you think makes you good at your sport?

**A:** "My shooting ability."

**Q:** What is the biggest challenge of being a student

athlete? Why?

**A:** "My biggest challenge is mostly time management. My first year it was kind of tough getting used to all that, but you eventually get the hang of it."

**Q:** Do you enjoy practicing in groups or individually?

**A:** "I like having the team practices because we get loud. We get hyped up for each other. [It's] just a different type of view than just working out by yourself in a quiet place."

**Q:** What other sport would you play besides basketball and why?



COURTESY PHOTO



COURTESY PHOTO

**A:** "I think football probably. Mainly because it's just such a cool sport. It is really fun to play."

**Q:** How do you think your sport has helped you?

**A:** "It has helped me a lot. Without basketball, I really wouldn't be where I am today. Without basketball, I wasn't going to actually go to college. You know, basketball was pretty much it. I didn't believe, like, school was for me. If I didn't get a scholarship, I wasn't going to go to school. I was just going to work. So, it's really helped me. I realized

that I can do school and stuff like that."

**Q:** Who has inspired you to continue playing and why?

**A:** "Probably my friends and my family. I play for them every single day. I always stay humble. I remember where I came from and I'll never turn my back on them. I always have their back. If I do make it big or something, I'm going to take care of my family. I want to make sure they're all good."

**-Compiled by Karina Rodriguez**



# The rise of dating apps

**Karina Rodriguez**

THE RIDER

Two UTRGV students helped shed light on the potential benefits of dating apps and their usage during the pandemic. As COVID-19 continues to interrupt daily lives, dating apps have seen an increase in usage.

A CNBC report said that amid the pandemic, the dating apps Bumble, Badoo and Tinder have seen an increase in usage by people in the age range of 20 to 30.

Senior marketing major Vanessa Martinez explained why she chose to use Bumble.

"I had just gotten dumped from a one-year relationship when I started using Bumble," Martinez said. "He was my first boyfriend ... and I wanted to feel like I had control in a way, so I figured using a dating app could do that for me. I had the control to say yes or no and was able to do what I wanted."

While the control she felt was great at first, Martinez ended up in an awkward situation.

"One bizarre interaction that stuck to me was a guy who catfished me," she said. "I saw him on Bumble, swiped and then we spoke for about



Roxanna Miranda/THE RIDER PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

a week when he asked me on a date. We met at the park and I realized that he failed to mention that his pictures were from when he was 19 and he was now 24."

Martinez explained how there are positives and negatives to the use of dating apps during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I truly am on the fence if people

should or shouldn't be using these apps during COVID," she said. "I believe it'll be good to get to know people and how they are reacting to a time like this and talk about what they feel about all that is happening. However, I do think it is bad because people are still meeting up and it does not help the COVID situation."

UTRGV mass communication junior

Maria Ruiz described a positive situation that came out of her use of Bumble.

"On Bumble, I interacted with many people and most were kind," Ruiz said. "Positive interactions ranged from asking questions beyond the usual 'What's your favorite color?' and 'What do you do for fun?' When I first messaged my current boyfriend, we actually spoke about our favorite season. That was all it took to start off a chain reaction that would soon develop into our relationship."

She also explained that while dating apps seem to be similar, the encounters made on them tend to vary.

"I never had bad experiences on Tinder, from what I recall, aside from running into two of my exes which was extremely awkward," Ruiz said.

For her, the use of dating apps during the pandemic was a way for her to interact with people despite being unable to see them in person.

"It made me open to distanced relationships and allowed me to focus more on emotional connection and compatibility rather than physical interaction," Ruiz said. "[Dating apps] made me realize that right now is a crucial time for connection, and it should not matter if it is through a screen."

## The Doodler

By Elizabeth Mendoza



**PERSONA**  
Continúa de Página 5

"Tu eliges y, pienso que lo que estamos aprendiendo es que hay un grado de empoderamiento en hacer esa elección por uno mismo", Torres-Hostos dijo. "Pero luego con esa elección también viene el hecho de que, ya sea, me excluyo de otros grupos, o que alguien más me vaya a excluir". El compartió su experiencia como puertorriqueño en los Estados Unidos. Torres-Hostos recordó que una vez unos

puertorriqueños le dijeron que no sonaba como puertorriqueño, a lo que él respondió enojado, "¿Cómo diablos se supone que suena un puertorriqueño, de todas formas?"

"Aún cuando tomas una decisión y te has vuelto cómodo con esa elección, hay un momento en tu trayecto, en el que alguien más te dirá que 'No eres lo suficiente para esto', él dijo. "No eres lo suficiente negro o no eres lo suficiente mexicano".

Hinojosa señaló que la pregunta del Censo 2020 para

que la personas identifiquen su raza especificaba: "Escoja una o más opciones Y ponga sus orígenes. En este censo, los orígenes hispanos no son razas". Las opciones para escoger eran blanco, negro o afroamericano, indioamericano o nativo de Alaska, chino, filipino, asiático hindú, vietnamita, coreano, japonés, otro asiático, hawaiano nativo, samoano, chamorro, otro isleño del Pacífico, o de otra raza.

"Hasta yo estaba, como, '¿Qué hago?'" él dijo. "¿Soy blanco? No soy blanco. Y luego,

¿Lo soy? Entonces es como, OK, esto es demasiado complicado, "¿Qué escogemos?"

Álvarez dijo que los hispanos y latinos están racializados en la manera en que no son blancos.

"Eso es lo que hace esas preguntas del censo absurdas ... porque así no es como somos tratados", ella dijo.

Álvarez también dijo que ella cree que UTRGV, como una institución que sirve a hispanos, debería exigir a sus alumnos a tomar una clase en estudios mexicanoamericanos de acuerdo

a la demografía.

"Es necesario conocer quiénes eres para empezar a conocer quiénes eres, tú historia y tus raíces, para que puedas empoderarte para tomar mejores decisiones personales", ella dijo.

Las instituciones que sirven a hispanos son instituciones de educación superior en la que se inscriben al menos un 25% de estudiantes hispanos.

Para terminar el evento, Hinojosa puso la canción "Bidi Bidi Bom Bom" de la cantante mexicana Selena.

**EDUCATION**  
Continued from Page 1

classes," she said. "I know that helped a lot of students get information when I was in high school. And the technology we have now, our phones give us a lot of access to information that makes it easier to gain an education."

Hernandez said attending college as an undergraduate student was hard on her mental health at times but her outlook on continuing her education, even in the midst of a

pandemic, has changed.

"As a senior, I've learned to enjoy my classes," Hernandez said. "Especially, now, in this pandemic, it's the one thing that motivates me to get up early in the morning, to walk outside, to do my homework, to talk to my fellow classmates and my friends who I have for classes. It gives me something to look forward to."

Peña-Oliva said Hispanic students today recognize the importance of education, come well-informed and prepared to college from high school, and

have the full support of their parents.

"If the parents believe in education, they are going to push the children to study," she said. "So, [from] very young in life they are going to understand the value of education."

Asked who she is continuing her education for, Hernandez replied her paternal grandmother.

"I'm continuing my education so she can say she has a grandchild who has a college degree," she said. "I mean, she has three other grandchildren

who have a college degree but I just want to keep adding to her list. She really made an impact on my life and this is the way I can repay her for everything she's done for me."

Two other people Hernandez said she is pursuing a degree for are her parents.

"My mom, she's a warrior," she said. "She's gone through so much in life, and she has a master's degree and I watched her take her online classes from Sam Houston State University. I see her degrees on our living room walls and I'm like, 'Wow,

I want one of those.' My dad as well, he went to Texas State [University]. I see his degrees as well and he's just always taught me, 'Whatever you want to do in life, go and get it, and don't be afraid of asking for help.'"

Hernandez said college is a rewarding experience and students should not give up.

"College, it may be hard, and it's a struggle to get through it ... but at the very end it's rewarding and nobody should give up," she said. "It's kind of a way to stay young."



**EDUCACIÓN**  
*Continúa de Página 5*

llamado GO Center y ahí contrataban a alguien de una universidad y ellos venían y nos ayudaban con nuestras solicitudes para la universidad, y ellos nos inscribían en clases de doble inscripción (dual enrollment)", ella dijo. "Sé que eso ayudó a muchos estudiantes a tener información cuando estaba en la preparatoria. Y la tecnología que ahora tenemos, nuestros celulares nos dan más acceso a la información que nos facilita obtener una educación".

Hernández dijo que ir a la universidad como una estudiante de pregrado a veces es difícil para su salud mental, pero a pesar de la pandemia, su perspecti-

va para continuar con su educación ha cambiado.

"Como una estudiante de último año, he aprendido a disfrutar de mis clases", Hernández dijo, "Especialmente, ahora, en esta pandemia, es una de las cosas que me motivan a levantarme temprano por la mañana, para caminar afuera, para hacer mi tarea, para hablar con mis compañeros y mis amigos con los que tengo clases. Me da algo por lo que seguir adelante".

Peña-Oliva dijo que hoy los estudiantes hispanos reconocen la importancia de la educación. Ellos vienen bien informados y preparados a la universidad de la preparatoria, y tienen el apoyo completo de sus padres.

"Si los padres creen en la educación, ellos van a alentar a sus hijos a estudi-

ar", ella dijo. "Entonces, [desde que] son jóvenes ellos van a entender el valor de la educación".

Se le preguntó por quién está continuando su educación. Hernández contestó, por su abuela paterna.

"Estoy continuando con mi educación para que ella pueda decir que tiene una nieta que tiene una licenciatura", ella dijo. "O sea, ella tiene otros tres nietos que tienen una licenciatura pero solo quiero seguir añadiendo a su lista. Ella en serio impactó mi vida y esta es la manera en la que puedo pagarle por todo lo que ha hecho por mí".

Las otras dos personas por las que Hernández tiene como meta alcanzar una licenciatura son sus padres.

"Mi mamá, ella es una guerrera", ella dijo. "Ha pasado por mucho en su vida

y tiene una maestría y yo la vi tomando clases en línea de Sam Houston State University. Veo sus diplomas en las paredes de nuestra sala y estoy como, 'Wow, yo quiero uno de esos'. Mi papá también fue a [la universidad] de Texas State. Veo sus diplomas también y él siempre me ha enseñado, 'Lo que sea que quieras hacer en tu vida, ve y alcánzalo, y no tengas miedo de pedir ayuda'".

Hernández dijo que la universidad es una experiencia gratificante y que los estudiantes no deberían rendirse.

"La universidad puede ser difícil y es una lucha pasar por ella ... pero al final es gratificante y nadie debería rendirse", ella dijo, "Es como una manera de mantenerse jóvenes".

--Traducido por Paulina Longoria

**GRADUATE**  
*Continued from Page 3*

- in Business Analytics
- M.B.A. with a Specialization in Accounting
- M.B.A. with a Specialization in Marketing
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- Students interested in applying to

graduate school can find information at [utrgv.edu/graduate](http://utrgv.edu/graduate) or by joining a free monthly live webinar and registering to learn more about program admission requirements, financial aid, scholarships and much more.

"This is the best time for students to enter in graduate programs because of the economic situation that we are in and also, with the pandemic, people just need to stay focused and they can complete their degrees now so that as soon as we open they will be ready to find that job," Grewal said.

**VOTE**  
*Continued from Page 1*

De La Trinidad said. She said during the 1960s, there was a lot of activism around voting and the importance of it. Various organizations, such as La Raza Unida Party, were created to elect representatives who would fight for Latino issues.

De La Trinidad said after Kennedy was assassinated, Latinos rallied around his successor, President Lyndon B. Johnson.

"What they wanted was national involvement, national inclusion, inclusion in the national federal structure," she said. "They wanted appointments to cabinets, they wanted appointments to important government positions so that they would be able to better represent their local constituency."

Sylvia Gonzalez-Gorman, an assistant professor of political science, said the Latino voter turnout has historically been low.

"It was high during the Obama administration, and a lot of Latinos did vote for Obama, and we saw mixed results with the Trump administration," Gorman said.

She said low voter turnout within the Latino community could be attributed

to multiple reasons. One reason might be economic, she said, meaning that individuals with lower socioeconomic status sometimes cannot take time off from work to go vote.

A second reason, she said, might be disinterest in voting, meaning Latinos might say, "What does it matter if I vote? Nothing is going to change anyway."

"So, there's that disinterest or apathy towards the political process in general," Gorman said.

The third reason is how the Latino vote is not targeted by politicians until two months or so before the election, she said. If one looks outside the Rio Grande Valley or California, there are not many Latino representatives that are calling folks to go vote.

"So, there's not a lot of interest in the Latino vote until two months before an election," Gorman said. "That's when they start engaging the Latinos."

She said solutions to low voter turnout is to get Latino communities registered to vote and to vote. She also said that encouraging Latinos to educate themselves on issues important to them will more likely get them to the polls.

In 2016, Latino Decisions, a leader in Latino political opinion research, conducted a collaborative multiracial post-election (CMPS) survey that found

the three most important issues to Latinos were immigration reform, health care and job creation/improvement of the economy. The survey, conducted by 86 social scientists from 55 universities, had 10,415 participants.

"Immigration legislation affects a large number of Latinos because of the different laws right now," De La Trinidad said.

She said issues regarding health affect Latinos in large numbers, especially in the Valley.

"One of the reasons that COVID hit so hard is because ... the Valley has lower numbers of people who are insured," De La Trinidad said.

She said if Latinos voted based on issues that are important to them, they could turn the election and make a huge difference.

Javier Villarreal, a political science sophomore at UTRGV and a student ambassador for Battleground Texas, a nonprofit organization helping to get Texans registered to vote, said he firmly believes Latinos are going to show up to vote and make a difference.

Villarreal's part in Battleground Texas is to get as many people in the Valley registered to vote as possible.

He believes a leading factor in the low voter turnout in the region is the lack of

voter information.

"As the months have rolled through, I have worked on registering 18-year-olds across the Valley and I have two responses coming from that age group, these being, 'I don't care about the government' or 'I don't know what you're talking about,'" Villarreal said.

He said there has to be a mobilization of information about what voting leads to and what it affects.

"Voting does not change things overnight. ... We have to keep our candidates in check," Villarreal said. "They work for us. It is our White House, not theirs. We have a really powerful voice and we have to use it, especially as Gen Z."

De La Trinidad said she encourages UTRGV students to get educated and vote.

"Change happens through young people," she said. "Many historical changes have happened because young people have gotten involved."

The deadline to register to vote is Oct. 5, with early voting starting Oct. 13 and ending Oct. 30.

For more information on how to register to vote and other election information, visit the Hidalgo County Elections Department or Cameron County Elections Department websites.

**STUDENT MEDIA**

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